sists of Britannia, with Wisdom, on one side, and Justice on the other, holding a wreath towards Painting, Sculpture, and Science. No. 5, by Mons. Wiener, is a crowded composition (even in present size), representing the various nations of the world bringing produce to Britain; and No. 6, by Mons. Gayrard, is a clumsy, well-draped single figure of Britannia, occupying the whole field of the medal, with a shield in one hand and wreaths and a palm-branch in the other.

We would here take the liberty of remarking, that when gentlemen accept office to examine into the merits of works submitted in competition, they ought in justice to make a point of attending. In the present case, we are told, that on the first day appointed for the examination, only three of the Committee were present, and a well-known wood-carver, who happened to put his head into the room, was actually invited to assist in the decision.

ARCHITECTS AND BUILDING COMMITTEES.

BRADFORD NEW WORKHOUSE.

THE Bradford guardians appear to be worrying the unfortunate "fortunate competitor" in the late competition, to whom the task of erecting the new workhouse has been entrusted. A whole column of the local paper of last week is occupied by a discussion as to whether or not the guardians should themselves appoint the clerk of the works, independently of the architect,—a clerk to *overlook* the architect, in fact, as one of the guardians correctly said. This they decided in the affirmative, coolly telling the architect, in reply to his protest against the course, that he might, if he pleased, appoint another clerk at his own expense!

Some of the guardians expressed their astonishment that any objection should be raised to the course they proposed to take, contending that, as they could have no practical knowledge of building, they were only seeking to appoint a person to superintend the works for them! All the architect asked was, that the board should recommend a certain number, and that he should select the most fitting one, and have control over him. But, no. These sharp-sighted individuals, having a cat to watch the mice, must now get some one to watch the cat. The architect asked for a week to consider what course he should adopt under the circumstances. His right course would be to resign the commission if the board will not give up their improper and unwise determination. All architects, however, cannot afford to maintain their position; and unfortunately, if the architect in this case were to put such an alternative, some architect or other would speedily be found mean-spirited enough to fill his place. Architects do not stand by each other as they should do; there is very little *esprit de corps* amongst them. When apparent personal advantage is pitted against the welfare of the body, the latter goes to the wall. If the motto, instead of being "Every man for himself," were "Every man for each," the result would be different. They now singly beat each other.

To Boards of Guardians and Building Committees, we say with earnestness, satisfy yourselves thoroughly as to the ability, discretion, and integrity of your architect before you appoint him: but when you have appointed him, put full confidence in him; interfere with the works as little as possible; remember that his time and mind are his stock in trade—the only things he has to sell, and that unnecessarily occupying one or disturbing the other is injurious not merely to himself but to your own interests.

THE AMSTERDAM WATER-SUPPLY.—The new company for the supply of soft spring-water to the City of Amsterdam is now in active course of formation. At present, the whole city is supplied by a boat water-company from stagnant tanks, at rates ranging from somewhat less than a farthing, to sometimes as much as a penny for every gallon. The new company intend to supply their more wholesome article at a mere trifle in comparison with these heavy charges.

ON LINEAL EXPRESSION AND ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN.

THERE are many men of various dispositions, but more especially of that turn called practical, who hold all such inquiries as the following to be vain speculations, and the accurate definition of words as mere philosophical play and absurd. What they do, they do; and that satisfies them. I would remind such of the words of Locke:—"Those who have particular callings ought to understand them, and it is no unreasonable proposal, nor impossible to be compassed, that they should think and reason rightly about their daily employment." Surely it is a natural and laudable desire in all men to know when they do this or that, why they do it, and, if they cannot, to know the reason of their inability. I would ask those who object to the nice distinction of words as frivolous and useless, whether words do not represent ideas, and whether ideas are not the source of knowledge? Consequently, if our words are confused, our ideas are confused, and our knowledge; and in the same way, if our words are distinct, our ideas are distinct,—our knowledge distinct; and before we investigate any subject, it is absolutely necessary to get and fix in our minds clear and complete ideas, and give them proper and constant names,—in fact, to know what we are talking about.

And most extraordinary is it to find the investigations on art, of the present, as of the past, full of this confusion of ideas; and little extraordinary is it, that unless the student take their dicta as unquestionable truth, he should rise from their perusal more perplexed and dissatisfied than before.

The science of all art, but most especially of architecture, is, I believe, very incomplete; and to arrive at its principles, we must begin afresh, putting aside the complex and abstruse speculations of the mere philosopher; the illogical method of attempting to explain its principles on those of another science, be it music, geometry, or arithmetic; and the generalising obscurity of ordinary conversation. In order to arrive at the truth, we must seek it for truth's sake, and not to confirm every idle fancy of our own. All that is required for this purpose is observation, method, and reflection: with these only can we expect to obtain our object — an object the more important as art becomes more generally practised, and is no longer confined to the care of true genius alone.

Our language supplies us with three words, which to every man of ordinary perception convey three distinct impressions,—grandeur, beauty, picturesqueness. If you call up visible objects to portray these words, or the ideas they convey to you, those objects will assuredly differ; and though, in the usual thoughtless manner of expressing ourselves, we might call them all beautiful, yet the definition, on consideration, would appear evidently inapplicable. An Alpine mountain, the Apollo Belvidere, and an old country church, can never come under one distinctive appellation, but are three separate qualities, requiring three separate words to explain them. It is true that they exist, in some degree, united in certain objects, but this is quite another subject for inquiry. Our advantage lies in simplifying, not in confusing our ideas; and if we can but conceive these three qualities as separate and distinct, which surely we can, one essential point in our favour is gained, and we can inquire into the nature of each separately, and discover the links by which they join one into the other.

To my mind, then, these are three strikingly distinct varieties of form, for it must be remembered that of form alone I speak, and the reader must consider that it is outline alone, as of plane geometry, which engages his attention, without colour, facial expression, or texture.

Having, then, made some reflections on this principle, which may be called abstract, as to the effect of certain lines, I will, without asserting my belief in their correctness, enumerate them. The circle is generally considered the most perfect of all forms — self-containing, without beginning or end—the emblem of the Deity. When divided into a semi-circle, it is still calm, continuous, self-relying, and truly grand. It is the form of the rainbow, which, as far as it goes, is a perfect form. I do not think it is a prejudice which induces me to think that a pointed rainbow would not be equally grand or beautiful, for the pointed outline is an imperfect or compound form; it possesses the angular character of the picturesque. When I ask myself what is the cause of grandeur or strength (an indispensable attribute of grandeur), connected with beauty, being impressed on my mind by the rainbow, the semi-circular arch, the full moon, and the biceps when compressed to strike, I cannot but perceive that the primary cause, as far as outline is concerned, is the circular form.

In the beam of a ship, in an egg, in all the outlines of graceful humanity, in the bellying of a sail, in the forms of Grecian art, in the gentle swell of a hill, in the movements of the snake, the leaf of the water-lily, the rolling wave,—it is beauty which is impressed on my mind, in a greater or less degree, according to the nature of the outline, and in all does the ovoid principle enter. Each of these forms in a compound state, if continuously joined, produces also more of beauty connected with strength in the circle, as seen in a moulding, and of beauty connected with grace as seen in the same moulding formed from ovoids.

This grace turns to weak delicacy in the cinque-cento moulding of Italy. This difference of character, arising from a greater or less degree of swelling in the curve, is more clearly seen in the muscles of the male and female.

The curves of either of these forms, compound, but incontinuously so, present to me the quality of picturesqueness, as in the holly leaf, the thistle, shells of these forms, the outline of a sail full of wind, the wing of the swallow-tail butterfly, a bird's bill, the foliations of Gothic ornament, the forms of its heraldic shields, and of its mouldings, in the Pointed arch itself, and in many of the single leaves of Moorish ornament.

As regards curves, then, we must come to the conclusion, I think, that a medium curvature expresses beauty as a centre; that as this tends to circularity, it expresses beautiful strength; and as it tends to a lesser curvature it expresses grace (the Apollo, the Hercules, and the Venus are examples of this, in a compound form, continuously varied); and that any compound series of curves, incontinuous and irregular, produce picturesqueness.

A straight line in itself expresses to me only straightness; but in its most simple compound and regular state, the right angle, it does allowedly represent strength; and formed into a square, still strength. To my mind it presents no other quality or character *per se*.

It seems almost unnecessary to prove by examples how it represents strength: we see it in all buildings, and the eye alone informs us that the slightest deviation from it tends to weakness. Strength, as before said, is undividable from grandeur. Size and strength will, in a measure, produce this character by themselves, as seen in the Cyclopean walls of antiquity. The square and the circle have, then, at least one distinct harmonising quality.

All angles less than the right angle impress the idea of sharpness; the more acute the angle the more sharp does it become. Now, the objects in which we find this form are all more or less picturesque, and the more compound and disjointed, the more picturesque. We see this in crystalline formations, such as basalt and spar, &c., the serrated ridges of rocks, icebergs, many trees and leaves (the ivy being one), old houses, and particularly in Gothic architecture and ornament. The mixture of both angles and curves, however, is most usual, and is found throughout picturesque nature and art.

Those objects, however, in which the angles predominate, such as ruins, trees, and rocks, are merely purely picturesque, whilst those in which continuous curves predominate are more confirmedly beautiful, as in birds, fish, many leaves, flowers, the hulls of well-built vessels, and their inflated sails. When, for instance, either of the last become broken, they become more picturesque; and may we not, putting all mental associations on one side, ascribe this to the altered and more jagged outline they have gained.

As regards the power of straight lines in producing beauty, where can we find an example? It would seem that what most answers to beauty arises in any combination of straight lines, from their relative proportion and sym-

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